

N E W S R E L E A S E

Contact: Loree Levy
Patrick Joyce
(916) 654-9029

Date: February 13, 2007

News Release No.: 07-A13

Community and Government Organizations Coming Together in Response to Growing Need of Workers Affected by Freeze

Bakersfield – A growing number of workers are finding assistance at designated One Stop Assistance Centers in Kern County and through two mobile units bringing a wide range of services directly to those most impacted by crop losses due to the freezing conditions that devastated the region in January.

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) is working with freeze coalitions in the affected areas and committing additional staff to the mobile operations to assist eligible workers in filing for Unemployment Insurance (UI), updating their resumes, and searching for new employment and training opportunities.

“The number of workers seeking assistance is growing in Kern County and EDD is proud to partner with a number of other government and community based organizations in meeting their needs in locations that are most convenient to workers,” said EDD Director Patrick Henning.

To date, 387 Unemployment Insurance claims related to the devastating winter weather have been filed in Kern County, out of a total of 3,864 disaster related claims in the state.

The Governor has also waived the one-week waiting period for filing for UI benefits. That allows eligible workers unemployed due to the freeze to collect more of their benefits faster, earning two weeks worth of benefits on their first check instead of one of those weeks serving as the customary waiting period.

In addition to expanded services provided through the mobile units and the two One Stop Centers in Kern County designated by Governor Schwarzenegger to provide immediate assistance to those impacted by the freeze, affected workers and employers will also find expanded services at other One Stop Employment Training Resource Centers in the county system. The three locations are as follows:

-more-

1600 East Belle Terrace
Bakersfield
(661)-635-2601

1816 Cecil Avenue
Delano
(661) 721-5800

5121 Stockdale Highway
Bakersfield
(661) 325-4473

The Small Business Administration is present in the center making information available to employers on Economic Injury Disaster Loans. In addition to the UI and Job Services available to eligible workers in the centers, a variety of other services include Food Stamps, CalWORKS assistance, Medi-Cal information, locations of food banks and primary care clinics, low-income energy assistance programs, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) referral services, and information on community-based organizations providing food, emergency shelter, blankets and other needs.

#